

SYN. NO. _____

AGN. NO. _____

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS ZEV YAROSLAVSKY AND
DON KNABE

August 14, 2007

In October of 2006, the County’s Section 8 Program was designated “troubled” by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (“HUD”) because it received only 73 out of a possible 145 points on HUD’s annual rating system.

The Section 8 program is of vital importance to this Board’s efforts to secure safe and decent housing for County residents and this unsatisfactory level of performance was, and is, deeply concerning. Fortunately, this is the first time that the County’s Section 8 program has been designated “troubled” and the Housing Authority and the Board of Supervisors has responded quickly to solve the identified problems. Specific improvements include:

- Reorganization of the Section 8 Management Team;
- Contracting with experts to help reform business practices, provide additional quality control, and assist with staff training;
- Acquiring a new software system to achieve efficient and accurate processing of voucher applications;
- Utilizing added housing locator services to help participants find homes; and,

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- Enhanced oversight and interaction between Housing Authority management and the Board of Supervisors.

As a result of these concentrated efforts, the Housing Authority's internal review indicates that the Program's projected score for the current year should be sufficient to remove its "troubled" designation.

However, HUD's recent communications to the Housing Authority indicate that they continue to have questions about the Section 8 program, particularly in the area of governance and oversight of the Housing Authority, and may wish to impose additional corrective actions on the Program. While we look forward to establishing a cooperative relationship with HUD, it is critical that decision makers at that federal agency work directly with this Board prior to reaching any final conclusions about the adequacy of the Housing Authority's governance mechanisms and before deciding what, if any, additional steps need to be taken to improve the Program's performance.

WE, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors send a five-signature letter to HUD Secretary Alphonso Jackson requesting an immediate meeting between HUD decision makers and the Board of Supervisors or its representatives to directly address HUD's concerns and mutually decide what, if any, additional steps should be taken to enable the Section 8 Program to eliminate its "troubled" designation and ultimately achieve the highest possible level of performance.

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